

## ***Arothron stellatus* (Anonymous, 1798) recorded from Gujarat, northwest coast of India**

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On 25<sup>th</sup> March 2014, a juvenile specimen of *Arthronstellatus* was landed by multiday trawler at Bhidiya Harbour, Veraval. Secondary information

collected from the fishermen roughly indicates that the fish was caught from a depth of 60 - 70 m. This fish which is poisonous to eat is commonly called

as Starry Puffer because of its typical body coloration. It is distributed in shallow waters in the tropical and subtropical areas of Indo-Pacific region. Though there are earlier reports of this species from Southern coasts of India, this is for the first time it is being reported from Gujarat waters.

***Arothron stellatus* (Anonymous, 1798)**

SYSTEMATICS

Class ACTINOPTERYGII

Order TETRAODONTIFORMES

Family TETRAODONTIDAE

Genus *Arothron* Muller, 1841

*Arothron stellatus* (Anonymous, 1798)



Fig. 1. *Arothron stellatus* juvenile

**Diagnosis**

A single lateral line on the side of torso; nasal organ is not covered by a small sac with two nostrils like other tetraodontids and have two bifid tentacles; nasal organ is visible to eye without any magnification in adults but not so easily detectable in juveniles

**Description**

*Arothron stellatus* has an oval body which is spherical and elongated. The skin is not covered with scales but with small spinules. Pelvic fin is

absent. The dorsal fin and the anal fin are small, symmetric and located at the rear end of the body. The head is large with a short snout which has two pairs of nostrils with bifid tentacles. The mouth is terminal with four strong teeth.

**Coloration**

The juveniles are characterized with deep yellowish body with black zebra stripes. Young adults may retain the stripes and yellow colour in the ventral region but primarily white coloured with star like spots. Light yellowish fins. Median fins with dark spots.

**Distribution**

Commonly found in the deep reef associated areas with sandy bottom. In India occurrence of this species were reported earlier in the southern region viz., Vizhinjam, Kashimedu, off Ratnagiri etc.

Table 1. Morphological and Meristics measurements of *Arothron stellatus* juvenile

Sl No	Characters	Measurements in mm
1	Total length	85
2	Standard length	71
3	Body depth	70
4	Eye diameter	4
5	Dorsal fin length	7
6	Dorsal fin base	2.5
7	Anal fin length	6
8	Anal fin base	3
9	Pectoral fin Length	11
10	Pectoral fin base	8
11	Caudal fin length	18
12	Caudal Peduncle depth	7
13	Total weight	34
14	Dorsal soft rays No.	10
15	Anal soft rays No.	11
16	Pectoral fin No.	18
17	Caudal fin No.	9
18	Weight (in grams)	36